

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 05863 221231Z

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ACTION NEA-10

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FOLLOWING REPEAT MADRAS 0718 SENT ACTION NEW DELHI

INFO BOMBAY/CALCUTTA 21 APR 76.

QUOTE:

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT VISITS TAMIL NADU

REF: MADRAS 688; MADRAS 690

1. PRESIDENT FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED, ACCOMPANIED BY BEGUM ABIDA AHMED, VISITED TAMIL NADU APRIL 15-18 FOR A PROGRAM THAT INCLUDED VISITS TO AND DEDICATIONS OF SHRINES, CORNER STONE LAYINGS, OPENING OF BUILDINGS, A ROUND OF GOLF, AND PRESENTATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S TROPHY TO THE WINNER OF THE GUINDY HORSE RACES.

2. AS HE APPARENTLY HAD IN KARNATAKA AND KERALA, THE PRESIDENT DEVOTED THE MAJOR PORTION OF THE SEVERAL SPEECHES HE MADE IN TAMIL NADU TO AN APPEAL TO THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY TO GIVE UP THE BELIEF THAT THEY HAVE NO STAKE OR INTEREST IN THE FUTURE OF INDIA. IN A SPEECH ON APRIL 16, HE SAID THAT "MUSLIMS MUST MAKE OTHERS FEEL THAT MUSLIMS ARE GOING HAND IN HAND WITH THEM AND

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PAGE 02 NEW DE 05863 221231Z

WORKING TO MAKE INDIA PROGRESS AND OVERCOME THE MANY DIFFICULTIES

IT FACES." HE IMPORED MUSLIMS TO BELIEVE THEY ARE "CITIZENS OF INDIA" WITH RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS AS CITIZENS. MUSLIMS MUST FORGET THEIR RELIGION SO FAR AS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS ARE CONCERNED, SHED THEIR INHIBITIONS AND WORK HARD FOR THE PROGRESS OF INDIA. HE ASSERTED THAT NEITHER THE KORAN NOR ISLAM HAD ORDAINED A SEPARATE COUNTRY FOR MUSLIMS, AND WARNED MUSLIMS THAT PAKISTAN IS NO "PARADISE." HE INVITED MUSLIMS TO "FORGET PAKISTAN" AND "FIRMLY BELIEVE" THAT THEY ARE INDIANS.

3. REFERRING TO THE TICKLISH AND CONTROVERSIAL MATTER OF PERSONAL LAW, RAISED IN A WELCOME ADDRESS TO HIM, PRESIDENT AHMED WONDERED WHY SUCH AN ISSUE, USUALLY RAISED ONLY BY COMMUNAL ORGANIZATIONS TO ATTRACT VOTES DURING ELECTIONS, HAD BEEN BROUGHT UP AT THIS TIME. BOTH HE AND THE PRIME MINISTER HAD REPEATEDLY ASSURED THE MUSLIMS THAT THE ADOPTION BILL NOW BEFORE THE INDIAN PARLIAMENT HAD NO RELATION TO THE MUSLIM PERSONAL LAW.

4. LATER ON APRIL 16 THE PRESIDENT STATED THAT HE SERVED A NEW DYNAMISM IN TAMIL NADU" AND DECLARED THAT THERE IS "NEW VIGOR AND A NEW DETERMINATION TO INCREASE PRODUCTION AND TO RAISE THE REAL INCOMES FOR THE URBAN AND RURAL PEOPLE ALIKE."

5. OPENING THE NEW BUILDINGS OF THE INDIAN LANGUAGE RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN MADRAS THE SAME DAY, THE PRESIDENT CALLED UPON THE PEOPLE "TO BURY ALL FUTILE CONTROVERSIES ABOUT LANGUAGES AND TO CONCENTRATE ON THE CONSTRUCTIVE TASK OF ENRICHING ALL OUR LANGUAGES." THE NEED OF THE HOUR, HE SAID, WAS TO BUILD BRIDGES OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN VARIOUS LINGUISTIC, CULTURAL, REGIONAL AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS AND TO STRENGTHEN THE BONDS OF NATIONAL UNITY. HE WAS SORRY, HE SAID, THAT OUT OF SHEER PREJUDICE OR ILL WILL, ONE'S LOVE OF ONE'S OWN LANGUAGE SOMETIMES TOOK THE FORM OF "A NARROW AND EVEN FANATICAL LOYALTY." REFERRING TO THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE POLICY, THE PRESIDENT STATED THAT PRIMACY WAS GIVEN TO THE MOTHER TONGUE, WHICH WOULD BE THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION AND ALL REGIONAL LANGUAGES WOULD BECOME THE LANGUAGES OF THE COURTS AND THE LEGISLATURES IN THEIR AREAS. INDIA, A MULTILINGUAL COUNTRY, REQUIRES A COMMON LINK LANGUAGE FOR DEVELOPING NATIONAL UNITY AND HINDI IS A LANGUAGE SPOKEN BY A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE AND UNDERSTOOD OVER A LARGE PART OF THE COUNTRY AND SO WAS FITTED TO SERVE AS THE COMMON LANGUAGE. THE TASK OF SPREADING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 05863 221231Z

HINDI REQUIRES PROFOUND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND INFINITE PATIENCE, HE ADDED. HE PAID RICH TRIBUTE TO THE TAMIL LANGUAGE AND ITS PREEMINENT POSITION IN THE LANGUAGES OF THE WORLD.

6. INAUGURATING THE SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF WRITERS FOR CHILDREN AT MADRAS APRIL 18, THE PRESIDENT CAUTIONED WRITERS THAT THEY SHOULD NOT BRING OUT ANYTHING THAT WOULD CREATE PAROCHIAL TENDENCIES IN CHILDREN AND SHOULD MAKE CHILDREN FEEL

THEY ARE CITIZENS OF INDIA. WRITERS FOR CHILDREN HAVE TO PREPARE THEM AS CITIZENS OF INDIA AND NOT AS THOSE BELONGING TO THIS STATE OR THAT REGION.

7. THE PRESIDENT TOLD NEWSMEN AT NAGAPATTINAM APRIL 17 THAT TAMIL NADU HAS TO GO A LONG WAY, AND PROGRESS CAN BE ACHIEVED ONLY THROUGH HARD WORK AND DISCIPLINE. HE SAID INDIANS MUST DEVELOP THE FEELING THAT ALL OF THEM BELONG TO ONE COUNTRY AND MUST FULFIL THE OBLIGATIONS TO MAKE THE NATION PROSPEROUS AND GREAT. HE HAS NO DOUBTS THAT THE PEOPLE OF TAMIL NADU WILL ADDRESS THEMSELVES TO THIS TASK AND ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE. HE FELT THAT THE SPONTANEOUS AND AFFECTIONATE WELCOME HE RECEIVED IN TAMIL NADU DEMONSTRATED THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE IN THE STATE TO WORK FOR THE UNITY, PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY.

8. COMMENT: THERE WAS LITTLE ENTHUSIASM FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL VISIT SO FAR AS WE COULD TELL, AND SAMACHAR REPORTS OF LARGE AND ENTHUSIASTIC CROWDS WERE GREATLY EXAGGERATED. THE GOVERNMENT HAD TAKEN THE USUAL PRECAUTION OF PUTTING UP BARRIERS ALONG THE PRINCIPAL THOROUGHFARES TO BE USED BY THE OFFICIAL PARTY, BUT THE TIME AND LABOR MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN SAVED. IN SHORT, THERE WERE NO CROWDS OF ANY SIGNIFICANCE ANYWHERE DURING HIS VISIT. THE FACT THAT THIS VISIT ATTRACTED EVEN LESS ENTHUSIASM THAN VISITS OF OTHER PRESIDENTS IN THE PAST COULD WELL BE ATTRIBUTED EEAUAAQ DOWON TO PRESIDENT'S RULE BY THE TAMILIANS, THOUGH THERE WAS NO SHOW OF ORGANIZED OPPOSITION OR HOSTILITY TO HIM THAT WE KNOW OF. THE PRESIDENT APPEARED TO BE SEEKING SUPPORT OF THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY FOR THE CONGRESS PARTY AND THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT. THE MUSLIM LEAGUE PREVIOUSLY SUPPORTED THE DMK IN TAMIL NADU, BUT, OPPORTUNISTIC TO THE CORE, IT WELCOMED THE IMPOSITION OF PRESIDENT'S RULE. IT HAS NOT OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED ITS PRESENT POLICY, BUT A SECTION OF THE LEAGUE LEADERSHIP FAVORS ALLIANCE WITH THE CONGRESS. THE PRESIDENT'S PROGRAM AND SPEECHES HERE LEAD TO THE CONCLUSION THAT HE WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 NEW DE 05863 221231Z

ATTEMPTING TO MAKE SURE THAT MUSLIM SUPPORT DOES INDEED GO TO THE CONGRESS.
MCCASKILL

UNQUOTE.
SAXBE

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